

INSTRUMENT #4

**TOPIC GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH
PARTICIPATING YOUTH**

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OMB Control No:
Expiration Date:

PAF IN-DEPTH IMPLEMENTATION STUDY YOUTH FOCUS GROUP MASTER PROTOCOL

Prior to the site visit, we plan to:

- A. Review documents and other data (proposals, site planning documents, evidence-based program (EBP) manuals, site selection documentation, design and implementation survey data, and performance measures data) to extract relevant information*
- B. Customize the youth focus group interview protocol to confirm information collected through document review and supplement with questions about specific youth experiences and views*
- C. Tailor the introduction to each site using the template interview introduction as a guide*

ORGANIZATION:

NO. OF PARTICIPANTS: _____

MATHEMATICA STAFF: _____ **DATE:** _____

NOTE TO SITE VISITOR:

- Introductory scripts are designed to guide you as you give instructions to study respondents.
- You do not have to read scripts verbatim. Use them as a guide for information to cover.
- Please cover this information either using the language provided here or in your own words.
- **However**, please be sure to convey the **informed consent information** precisely. Here, you should read the text verbatim. Please be sure the interview respondent reads the informed consent form carefully, signs two copies, keeps one for her/himself and returns one to you.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FOCUS GROUP (5 MINUTES)

Thank you for agreeing to meet with us. As you know, we are from Mathematica Policy Research, an independent research firm. My name is

[NAME OF FOCUS GROUP FACILITATOR]. This is [NAME OF NOTE TAKER]. We are part of an independent research team funded by a federal program that is run by Office of Adolescent Health (OAH) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

We are here today to learn more about your experiences with [NAME OF PROGRAM]. Your point of view as teen parents participating in the program is extremely valuable. Our conversation today will take about 90 minutes. We will record and take notes during our conversation. This will help us remember what you say correctly. If anyone would prefer that we not record our conversation, we will not record it. The recording will be erased after we have completed writing up our notes.

Privacy Statement: We will keep the information you share with us private. We will only use first names as we talk today. We will not ask for or write down your first or last names; and if we use quotes from this discussion, we will not include the name of the person who made the statement. No one but the researchers will see any of the notes from our discussion.

We are also talking to other youth participating of [NAME OF PROGRAM]. We will take our notes from our conversation today and combine it with information from other conversations with teen mothers and fathers. This will help understand how [NAME OF PROGRAM] is working and what youth like you think about it.

Please keep in mind:

- There are no right or wrong answers to our questions. Our questions are designed to learn about your experiences with [NAME OF PROGRAM] and what you think about it.
- Being part of our discussion is completely voluntary. You do not need to answer any questions you do not wish to answer.
- There are no penalties or consequences for not answering our questions.
- Please do not use your own or each others' full names. Please just use first names.
- Please remember to be respectful of everyone's opinions, even if they are different from your own.
- Please do not talk about your own personal behaviors with the group today, although we welcome your thoughts about the program itself.
- Please do not share what we discuss today outside of this room. Please respect one another's privacy. We cannot, however, guarantee that all group participants will honor this request.

- Again, remember, your participation in this conversation is up to you. You do not have to participate and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.
- Would anyone like to add any additional ground rules for our discussion?

INFORMED CONSENT (10 MINUTES)

I would now like to go over the informed consent process with you. Informed consent is when we explain the following topics to you:

- The purpose of this study
- The way our discussion today will work
- How we will use the notes we will take during our conversation today before you agree to participate, and
- Information about your rights and the risks for you.

INTERVIEWERS SHOULD CONDUCT INFORMED CONSENT PROCESS

- Pass out two copies of the informed consent form to each youth.
- Read consent form aloud and ask youth if they have any questions.
- Answer all questions.
- Ask youth to sign it, give you one copy and keep one copy for him/herself

PRE-DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (2 MINUTES)

I want to say again that there are no right or wrong answers to our questions. I also want to remind you that you do not have to answer any of these questions. We would like to ask you to answer these questions based on your own ideas and opinions.

- Do you understand the purpose of our conversation today?
- Do you have any additional questions before we start?

I. ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

Many of you may already know each other, but we would also like to get to know you. Let's go around the room and tell us your name, and your child's name and how old they are. You do not have to give your name if you do not want to.

- As I mentioned, we are here today to talk about your experiences with [NAME OF PROGRAM]?
- Before [NAME OF PROGRAM], had you ever participated in any program(s) similar to this one?
- If so, can you tell us about the program(s)? Where was it/they offered? What services did you receive? What did you think of those other programs? How did it compare to this program?
- Right now, do are you participating or know of any other programs or classes that cover the same or similar topics as [NAME OF PROGRAM]? [ASK FOR A SHOW OF HANDS]
 - Please describe the similar program(s).
 - How is it similar? How is it different?
 - Where do you have access to it? Another organization, clinic, your school, etc?
 - How many of your friends participate in this program?

II. PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT AND MOTIVATION (15 MINUTES)

1. How did you learn about [NAME OF PROGRAM]?
 - a. Did someone invite you to participate in this program?
 - b. If so, who and how?
2. Were you required to enroll in the program or could you decide yourself whether or not to participate?
3. What attracted you to [NAME OF PROGRAM]? Probe: Why did you enroll?
4. What are your goals for yourself and for your child? For your family? What would you like to have or be able to do by the end of the program?
5. What did your family think when you enrolled? Did you tell them about it or ask for their advice? Were they supportive?
6. Who do you turn to when you need help or support with your financial, parenting, or educational needs?

III. PARTICIPATION (10 MINUTES)

7. How much have you been able to participate in [NAME OF PROGRAM]?

Probes:

- Have you been able to attend all the sessions and keep your scheduled appointments?
 - o If not, how many sessions or visits have you missed? What were some of the reasons you couldn't participate?
 - Have you been able to participate in all the activities and complete any assignments?
 - o If not, which activities and assignments did you miss? What caused you to miss some of these activities or assignments?
8. Approximately how often did you meet with the facilitator per month?
 9. What were some of the topics you talked about in [NAME OF PROGRAM]?
 10. What are the issues or topics you think you need the most help or support with?

Probes: contraception, HIV/STI prevention, financial literacy, communication, education and career planning, parenting.

IV. BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION (10 MINUTES)

11. What, if anything, has made it difficult or challenging for you to participate in [NAME OF PROGRAM]?
- If it was difficult, were you able to overcome any difficulties?
 - If so, how?
 - What help did you receive from the program to overcome these difficulties?

V. PROGRAM SATISFACTION AND OUTCOMES (30 MINUTES)

12. Overall, what did you like best about [NAME OF PROGRAM]?

13. What is something you did not like about [NAME OF PROGRAM]?

Probe: If you could change one thing about [NAME OF PROGRAM], what would it be?

14. Overall, what did you think about the program's content, topics and activities?

Probes:

- Were the materials difficult or easy to understand and use?
- Was the facilitator (social worker, case worker, etc) comfortable discussing the program with you?
- Did you think the facilitator did a good job presenting the materials and information?
- What did you like/dislike about how the facilitator presented the information or conducted the activities?

15. Overall, what do you think about your case manager/social worker?

Probes:

- Are they easy to talk with?
- Do you find them helpful and caring?
- Has your relationship with them changed over time?

16. What are the most important things you learned from [NAME OF PROGRAM]?

17. What do you like best about [NAME OF PROGRAM]? What do you like least about it?

18. What would like to see changed about [NAME OF PROGRAM]?

Probes:

- How would you change it?
- Why would you change it?

19. Do you think having been in [NAME OF PROGRAM] will affect how you behave or anything you do in the future?

- a. If so, how?
- b. If not, why not?

20. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the worst and 5 the best, how would you rate your experience in [NAME OF PROGRAM]?

Probe: Why?

21. Would you say participating in the program has helped you meet your needs and goals? If so, how? If not, why not?

22. How would you describe [NAME OF PROGRAM] to someone who is about the same age as you, and whom you just met (someone new to your school or program)?

Probes:

- What is the purpose of the program?
- What are the main parts of the program?
- Who can participate in the program?
- Is it a good program?
- Why is it a good or bad program?

23. Would you encourage your friends to be in [NAME OF PROGRAM]?

- If so, why?
- If not, why not?

VI. CLOSING/THANK YOU

24. Is there anything else anyone would like to say about [NAME OF PROGRAM] before we wrap up?

Thank you for your participation today!

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